INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY/DISTRICT MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST INTERNAL NR-ELIGIBILITY REVIEW FORM

Property/District Name: <u>Edgemere Elementary Sc</u>	Survey Number: BA 4 12
Project: Proposed demolition and new constructi	ion Agency: <u>S/PSCP</u>
Site visit by MHT Staff: X no $\ $ yes $\ $ Name $\ $	Date
Eligibility recommended X Eligibility	not recommended
Criteria: XA BC C D Considerations:	ABCDEFGNone
Justification for decision: (Use continuation	sheet if necessary and attach map)
Based on existing information, the Trust bel significant for its role in public education in t Baltimore County. Located at the corner of Sparr Elementary reflects the changes which occurred it Baltimore County, such as the consolidation of facilities incorporating educational policy of parallels the productivity of Bethelham Steel school was designed by the Board of Education's May, a local firm responsible for numerous Baltim the twentieth century.	he North Point/Edgemere community and within rows Point Road and North Point Rd., Edgemere n public education in the 1920s and 1930s in student populations into one school and new hanges. Growth of the school population during World War II. The majority of the most prolific architectural firm, Smith and
	•
Documentation on the property/district is present	ed in: attached with form Protos Locates
W COMPLIANCE FILE "EDGEMEKE ELEMENTARY!	" UNTIL COMPLETION OF PEULEW
Prepared by: <u>Baltimore County Public Schools, R</u>	andy Smith, architect
L. Bowlin	10/02/95
Reviewer, Office of Preservation Services	Date
NR program concurrence:yes no no	ot applicable
Orlando Prodnik	10-2-95
Reviewer, NR program	Date

gara

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA - HISTORIC CONTEXT

I.	Geographic Region:			
	Eastern Shore Western Shore	(Anne	Eastern Shore counties, and Cecil) Arundel, Calvert, Charles, ce George's and St. Mary's)	
X	Piedmont	(Baltimore City, Baltimore, Carroll, Frederick, Harford, Howard, Montgomery) (Allegany, Garrett and Washington)		
	Western Maryland			
II.	Chronological/Developmental Pe	riods	:	
	Paleo-Indian Early Archaic Middle Archaic Late Archaic Early Woodland Middle Woodland Late Woodland/Archaic Contact and Settlement Rural Agrarian Intensification Agricultural-Industrial Transi Industrial/Urban Dominance Modern Period Unknown Period (prehisto		10000-7500 B.C. 7500-6000 B.C. 6000-4000 B.C. 4000-2000 B.C. 2000-500 B.C. 500 B.C A.D. 900 A.D. 900-1600 A.D. 1570-1750 A.D. 1680-1815 A.D. 1815-1870 A.D. 1870-1930 A.D. 1930-Present historic)	
III.	Prehistoric Period Themes:		IV. Historic Period Themes:	
	Subsistence Settlement Political Demographic Religion Technology Environmental Adaptation		Agriculture Architecture, Landscape Architecture, and Community Planning Economic (Commercial and Industrial) Government/Law Military Religion Social/Educational/Cultural	
	BIIVII OIMICIICAT TAAApeaciosi		Transportation	
v. R	esource Type:			
	Category: <u>building</u>			
	Historic Environment: _villac	ae		
	Historic Function(s) and Use(s	g): _	educational/elementary school	
		000 10	14 restions - Smith and Mar	
	Known Design Source: _1923,19	<u> 130,19</u>	44 sections = Smith and May	

EDGEMERE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL HISTORY

Children from the Edgemere area walked to an elementary school, erected in 1903, located at 8th and "D: streets in Sparrows Point. Children along North Point Road attended a different two room school house located at North Point Road and Lodge Farm Roads.

As the steel company in Sparrows Point expanded and families moved into the area to take jobs in the expanding mills, the need for schools increased. A structure formerly owned by the North Point Methodist Episcopal Church South became the Edgemere School. This building functioned as a school house between 1915 and its closing in June 1924. Until 1923 the Edgemere School was a two room school. A room was added to the back of the structure for the school year 1923-1924.

In June of 1924 Edgemere School on Schlimme Ave. (School House Lane) closed its doors. A new 8 room school with an auditorium was opened on September 15, 1924 at the corner of Sparrows Point and North Point Roads. With the opening of the new school, the North Point School was closed. The consolidation of these two schools became known as North Point-Edgemere School. Later North Point was dropped from the name and the school was then called Edgemere Elementary.

In 1930 eight additional rooms were added as Bethlehem Steel Corporation continued to expand, the population increased and additional school facilities were needed. (Note, this addition

is indicated as built in 1935 in the Feasibility Study by BCPS, prepared by Mr. Mark Bunich, dated March 1995.) This growth continued into the 1960's. By then two more additions had been added, one in 1944 and another in 1966. Enrollment reached its peak in the mid 1960's with approximately 1200 students attending Edgemere Elementary School.

School Statics

North Point-Edgemere Consolidated School:

Year Designed:

Year Constructed: 1923 Architect: Smith & May Structural: Henry Massant Mechanical: Henry Adams

Alterations & Additions:

Year Designed: 1929
Year Constructed: 1930
Architect: Smith & May
Structural: Henry Massant
Mechanical/Electrical: H. Egli

Alterations & Additions:

Year Designed: 1942 Year Constructed: 1944 Architect: Smith & May

Structural: Information not available

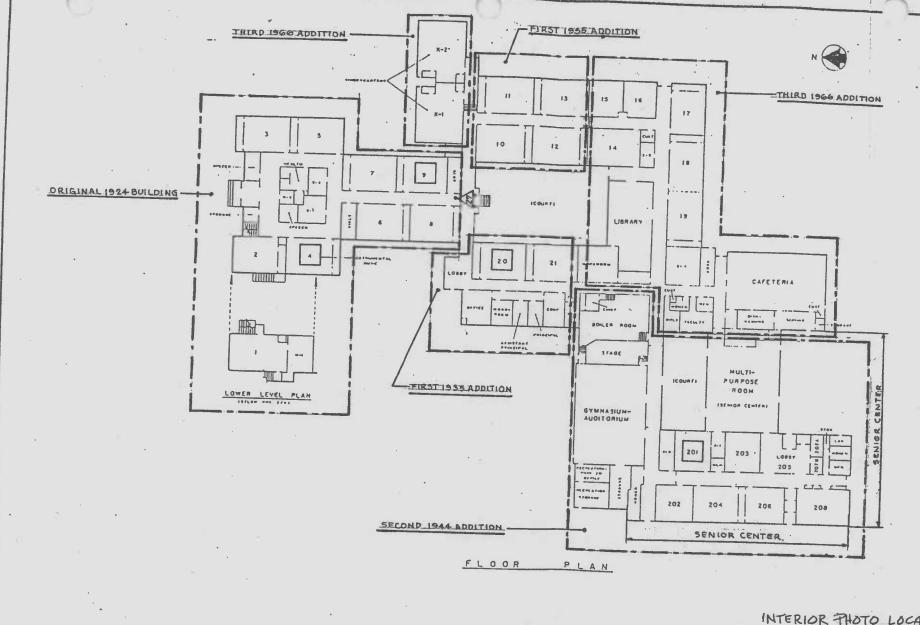
Mechanical/Electrical: Information not available

Additions & Alterations

Year Deigned: 1965

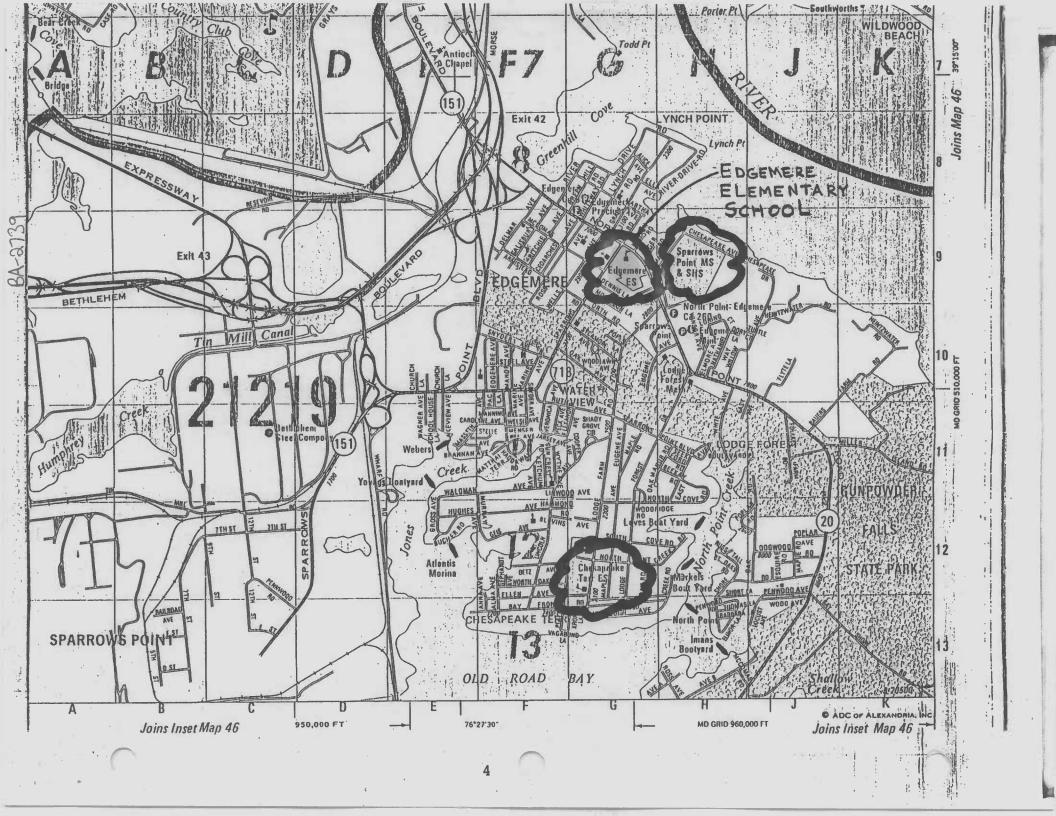
Year Constructed: 1966

Architect: Hall, Ritter & Sprinkle Structural: Crout, Snyder & Crandall Mechanical/Electrical: Palmer & Lentz



INTERIOR PHOTO LOCATIONS

. DIVISION OF PHYSICAL FACILITIES			BOARD OF EDUCATION OF BALTIMORE		
200000	/ '.	DATE SEPT 12,1948	ROOM LAYOUT		
4.C.E.		SCALE	EDGEMERE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL		
Brane		SHEET, I OF I			



BA - 2739 Edgemere Elementary School 7201 North Point Road Baltimore County

This one-story, brick elementary school sits on a 15.4 acre site at the intersection of Sparrows Point and North Point Roads in the Edgemere neighborhood of the Patapsco Neck section of Baltimore County. The school addresses the corner, with a north-facing facade. Adjacent to the school are small parking areas to the south, east, and west, and playing fields to the south. The school has grown incrementally over the years due to the extensive growth of the Edgemere neighborhood, which has paralleled that of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation's Sparrows Point facility. The original 1924 school house (Period 1) contained eight classrooms and an auditorium and was designed by Smith & May. Period 2 consists of an additional eight classrooms to the south, also designed by Smith & May and completed in 1930. Period 3, again by Smith & May and constructed in 1944, is a larger extension to the southwest containing ten classrooms and a play room/gymnasium/cafeteria. Period 4, designed in 1965 by Hall, Ritter, and Sprinkle, features several noncontiguous additions that include a lobby, a series of classrooms and special purpose rooms, a kindergarten wing, and a cafeteria. Period 5, constructed in 1985 and designed by Gregory Mitchell - Architecture and Kelly Clayton & Mojzisek, renovated the 1944 wing of the building for a senior center and added a large, multi-purpose room to the rear of the structure. The Edgemere Elementary School is historically significant for its association with the development and growth of the Edgemere neighborhood between the 1920s and 1940s (Criterion A). Although not necessarily eligible under Criterion C, the building is a good example of primary school architecture of the period and was designed by Smith & May, chief consultants to the Maryland State Department of Education.

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form HISTORIC PROPERTIES

MARYLAND INVENTORY OF

Magi No. DOE __yes __no

historic Nort	th Point-Edgeme	re Consolidated S	ah a a 1	
and/or common				
2. Loc	Eddewere Fie	mentary School(pr	eferred)	
treet & numbe	r 7201 North Po	oint Road		not for publication
ity, town		_x_ vicinity of	congressional district	7th
	land	county	Baltimore	
B. Clas	sification			
ategory district building(s) structure site object	Ownership _x_ public private both Public Acquisition in process being considered not applicable	110	Present Use agriculture commercial educational entertainment government industrial military	museum park private residence religious scientific transportation other:
. Own	er of Prope	erty (give names ar	nd mailing addresses	s of <u>all</u> owners)
me _{Balti}	more County Pub			
	9610 Pulaski P		+-11	
	ltimore		cerephone no	·: 410-887-6356
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7. Desc	ription		Survey No. BA-2739	-
endition excellent	deteriorated	Check one unaltered _x_ altered	Check one X_ original site moved date of move	

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

See Continuation Sheets for Narrative

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____ unexposed

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Period preh	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below	
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Specific	dates 1924-1944 Builder/Architect Sm	i+h 0 Ma
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	Applicable Exception: _A _B _C _D _	
	Level of Significance:nationalstate	x_local
Prepare support	both a summary paragraph of significance and	

See Continuation Sheets

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. BA-2739

See Continuation Sheets

10. Geograph	ical Data		
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The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to:

Maryland Historical Trust Shaw House 21 State Circle

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST DHCP/DHCD 100 COMMUNITY PLACE CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023 -514-7600

BA-2739 Edgemere Elementary School 7201 North Point Road Baltimore County

SECTION 7.1

SUMMARY

This one-story, brick school is a rather sprawling structure composed of five stages of construction. It is a masonry, load-bearing structure with wood-framed floors and roofs in the older sections. The original portion rests upon brick piers that sit, in turn, on concrete footers. The building is flat-roofed, with a central monitor in the original section, tall banks of windows in all sections, and minor brick detailing throughout to vary the otherwise plain surfaces. The characteristics of its contributing sections are primarily those of the straightforward expression of educational requirements of the 1920 -1945 period - an emphasis on plan over decorative detailing, daylighting, and sanitary and safety measures.

The building is comprised of five principle stages of development, shown as Figure 1 and described as follows:

<u>Period 1</u>: This is the original, 1924 school house. It was designed by Smith & May for the Board of Education of Baltimore County. Henry Massant of Baltimore was the structural engineer and H. Adams, the mechanical/electrical consultant on the project. The original structure was T-shaped, featuring four classrooms flanking an open auditorium in the main block, with a double-loaded corridor to the rear (the trunk of the "T") which featured four additional classrooms.

<u>Period 2:</u> This is the first addition, added in 1930, also to the design of Smith & May with Massant as structural consultant and H. Egli as mechanical/electrical consultant. This addition, added to the south of the existing structure, was an inverted U shape. It contained a corridor connecting old to new, and two wings of four classrooms each spanning a three-sided courtyard.

<u>Period 3:</u> This is the second addition, added in 1944, also to the design of Smith & May. This addition was constructed under the Federal Works Agency's War Public Works program. This new wing, added to the southwest of the facility, continued the inverted U shape of 1930, but with a longer west wing. To the existing structure, it added more classrooms, a replacement boiler room, and a playroom/gymnasium.

<u>Period 4:</u> This is the third addition, added in 1966, and designed by Hall, Ritter & Sprinkle. This work consisted of five noncontiguous structures of varying scale, along with interior renovations.

BA-2739 Edgemere Elementary School 7201 North Point Road Baltimore County

SECTION 7.2

<u>Period 5:</u> In 1985, the 1944 wing of the building was converted into the Edgemere Senior Center through minor interior modifications, and a multi-purpose room was added to the south wall of the building.

SETTING

The Edgemere Elementary School sits at the intersection of Sparrows Point and North Point Roads in the Edgemere neighborhood of the Lower Patapsco Neck section of Baltimore County. The building is angled on its site to address this historic meeting of the area's two oldest roads and a flagpole is positioned on the front lawn. (The flag pole used to be mounted on the roof of the building near the front gable.) The structure has a north-facing facade and several building extensions to the south and west. Its 15.4 acre-lot encompasses four small parking areas (two to the east, one to the south, and one to the west), a tot lot (to the east), and playing fields (to the southeast).

The area immediately surrounding the school contains neighborhood-level retail establishments on North Point Road and housing on Sparrows Point Road. In general, the Edgemere neighborhood consists of several small enclaves of working-class housing built up over several decades of the 20th century. The neighborhood growth has, essentially, paralleled that of the area's largest employer, Bethlehem Steel. (See Significance Statement.)

BUILDING EXTERIOR

PERIOD 1: 1924 SECTION (See Figure 2)

THE NORTH FACADE

The facade of the original school is seven bays wide. It is made interesting by variations in the wall plane. Five bays within a center section feature a modestly projecting, gable-parapeted entrance bay and two end bays boldly project from this central plane. Originally, the building featured 6/6, double-hung sash on this facade, making the building decidedly Colonial Revival in appearance. Today, this traditional aesthetic is diminished by the introduction of aluminum-frame double-hung windows with single pane lexan glazing in a horizontally divided configuration. The walls are common-bond brownish-red brick with randomly glazed headers. A subtle water table is indicated by a header course. The flat roof was originally covered in slag, but today is sheathed in a single-ply, Carlisle-seamed roof.

BA-2739 Edgemere Elementary School 7201 North Point Road Baltimore County

SECTION 7.3

Metal roof ventilators are located at various points. The original drawings also indicate a salt-glazed, terra-cotta coping at the top of the walls, which today is metal.

The primary opening to the school is approached via three concrete steps with brick supporting walls. The entrance is composed of a granite sill, a double door, and a limestone surround with full entablature. Originally, there were double doors of eight lights above a single wood panel with a fixed-light, ten-pane transom. Today's entrance maintains the original transom, but features replacement doors. The individually cut metal letters affixed to the facade are a relatively recent addition.

Window trim on this facade is simple, consisting of stone sills and soldier course jack arches. Sunken brick panels accentuate the wall surface above each of the four windows in the central section. The two projecting end bays feature sunken brick panels enframing what are today blind niches, but what were originally a blind niche in the west bay and a 6/6, double-hung sash window in the east bay.

EAST AND WEST WALLS

The east and west elevations are virtually identical (except for the location of a single, small opening and an areaway entrance to the boiler room) and can be described together. In the main block of the "T," the classrooms on the west side of the plan are evident from the double banks of windows. Each bank contains six units set within a single opening. The opening is detailed by a soldier course at the window heads and straight-jointed brickwork that starts at the jambs and continues all the way down to the building's water table. The main block features stone sills. The original copper downspouts still exist at either end of this block.

Behind the main block in the narrower trunk of the "T" are two more classrooms that continue the banked window theme. Here, the sills are bricks laid on edge instead of stone. In between the rear two banks of windows, a simple inverted diamond in brick at the lintel level provides the only ornamental touch.

Originally, all window openings on the east and west walls contained 9/9, double-hung sash. Today, the units are five-panel, horizontally divided lexan glass in aluminum frames, the top pane of which is opaque. Beneath the windows, placed at regular intervals, are wood air vents dating to the original construction.

BA-2739 Edgemere Elementary School 7201 North Point Road Baltimore County

SECTION 7.4

Visible from these walls is the monitor-roofed section that marked the original auditorium space. This hipped-roof element originally featured three-pane glass units that pivoted for ventilation. Today, the glass has been removed and replaced with solid panels and the roof is shingled in asphalt.

The original boiler room, located in the basement, is accessed on the exterior from the west wall through an areaway containing steps. The tall brick chimney to this boiler room has been removed.

SOUTH WALL

The original exterior south wall was reconfigured as an interior wall to accommodate the 1930 addition.

PERIOD 2: 1930 SECTION

This inverted U-shape addition has outer walls that are visible from the street and inner walls visible from an enclosed school courtyard.

OUTER EAST AND WEST WALLS

These walls contained the classroom wings. Since this addition was designed by Smith & May just five years after the firm's design for the original building, the connection between the two sections is almost seamless and the vocabulary identical. The same choice of brick and bonding is used. The method of delineating the banks of windows with soldier courses at headers and straight-edged brickwork from the jambs to the water table also is the same. One difference is the parapeted cornice of the addition, as opposed to the straight-line cornice of the original classroom wings.

COURTYARD WALLS

The remaining walls of this addition can be viewed from the courtyard established by the connection between the 1930 and 1966 additions.

The north wall within this courtyard features the same, gable-parapeted, projecting entrance bay as the building's primary facade, but has an even bolder limestone surround. In the

BA-2739 Edgemere Elementary School 7201 North Point Road Baltimore County

SECTION 7.5

gable is the same, sunken brick panel, with stone sill. To either side of the opening are single window units, with sunken brick panels above.

The inner east and west walls of the classroom wings continue the themes established in the original structure, including the use of an inverted triangle of brick at the lintel line, between the banks of classroom windows.

PERIOD 3: 1944 ADDITION

Also designed by Smith & May, this is a more sizeable addition than the classroom wings that composed the 1930 addition. This addition, added to the south wall of the west wing of the 1930 structure, expanded the building to the southeast. It includes two, one-story wings flanking a taller gymnasium block. In the center of the complex is a circular brick stack indicating the location of a new boiler room. This additions was made with cinder block walls with a brick veneer.

NORTH WALL

The north wall of the 1944 wing is a two-story space (open on the interior from floor to ceiling) containing the school's gymnasium. The north wall features three tall windows and two standard size units set approximately halfway up the wall to provide daylight to the gym without being a hazard due to activities occurring within. The fenestration consists of segmentally arched openings which now feature horizontal muntins (the top section of which is opaque), but originally featured multi-pane units with a central pivoting section for ventilation. The brickwork is the same as that throughout earlier portions of the building in color, texture, and bonding. The purely decorative cornice of this wall consists of creme-colored glazed brick panels set in a string course. (The 1942 drawings indicate that red and gray bricks were supposed to be selected for this detail.) The same creme-colored brick is used to create small panels between the central bays at the sill level. There are two segmentally arched openings to the gymnasium in the end bays of the block. Above these are rectangular metal plates affixed to the wall surface that may be covering damaged brick, since small porches originally extended out from these entrances. The doors in place today on this wall are not original.

BA-2739 Edgemere Elementary School 7201 North Point Road Baltimore County

SECTION 7.6

EAST AND WEST WINGS

Due to an addition made in 1966, most of the walls of the east wing of the 1944 addition have been removed. Only a portion of the west wall remains visible in a courtyard.

The walls of the west wing feature the same, common-bond, brownish-red brick as earlier portions. The soldier course and straight-edge brickwork that defined the banks of classroom windows in the 1924 and 1930 sections have been translated into a single soldier course running across the wall at the height of the top pane of glass. Individual openings in this wing, such as single doors and windows, are segmentally arched. Classroom windows are the same, flat-arched banks of windows established earlier, but now with five units in each. Like the rest of the building, today's windows are replacements. This wing contains many window air-conditioning units to serve the Senior Center. A semi-circular portico has been added to the west wall of this wing and a new door has been cut.

PERIOD 4: 1966 ADDITION/RENOVATION

This addition, designed by Hall, Ritter, and Sprinkle, added several noncontiguous structures to the already sprawling school. This addition also was constructed of concrete block with a brick veneer. The various structures in this period of construction employ the same bonding pattern as all previous sections, but the brick is a redder hue. The new sections have continued the soldier course banding at the upper window level, first established in the 1944 addition. Classroom window banks have been reduced to four units, contained by a single sill and head, and fitted with newer sash.

The kindergarten section of this addition features wide bay picture windows with multi-pane lights on the north wall. The lobby addition, entered via the parking lot on the building's west side, is a small, nondescript brick structure. The cafeteria also is an unadorned brick block with three sets of double windows featuring opaque and clear glass.

PERIOD 5: 1985 SENIOR CENTER RENOVATIONS AND MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM ADDITION

In 1985, the 1944 west wing of the school was converted to a Senior Center and a multipurpose room added between the 1965 cafeteria and the west wing. The room, visible from the south of the lot, is a 1 1/2-story structure of white stucco with banded windows with horizontal divisions.

BA-2739 Edgemere Elementary School 7201 North Point Road Baltimore County

SECTION 7.7

BUILDING INTERIOR

PERIOD 1: 1924 SECTION (See Figure 3)

The plan of the original, T-shaped schoolhouse featured an entry vestibule, flanked by two very small rooms that functioned as the teachers' room and library. Behind these rooms was an open auditorium with a movable platform for performances. Doors off the auditorium led directly into classrooms on either side. Each classroom was approximately 675 square feet with an adjoining coat room of 60 square feet. Each room featured a built-in blackboard with tackboard above, and a built-in five-panel, double-door book case; these features are still in use today. According to drawings, the plaster walls beneath the window banks were to feature wall boxes, but there is no evidence of their existence today.

Behind this main block was the narrower trunk of the T. This section featured a double-loaded corridor with two more classrooms on either side and restrooms in the corners.

The materials of the original structure included painted plaster walls with wood chair rails; plaster ceilings; wood floors; wood corridor doors with glass panels and tall, 12-light transoms. Today, the buildings's plaster walls have peeling paint, the original corridor doors are intact but transoms have been removed, ceilings have been dropped and feature acoustical tiles with hanging fluorescent lights, and floors are covered in vinyl asbestos tile. Wooden radiator covers with mesh screens line the corridors of this original section. The restrooms in this portion of the building are intact, still featuring wood-panelled stall doors.

In the basement on the west side of the main block is the original boiler room and coal bin, which are now obsolete.

PERIOD 2: 1930 ADDITION

The plan of this section is an inverted U, with a corridor linking two wings. Each wing features a double-loaded corridor of two classrooms to either side. One wing features a girls' restroom in the corner and the other, a second teachers' room in the opposite corner. The interior of this section is identical to that of the original structure by way of planning and materials.

BA-2739 Edgemere Elementary School 7201 North Point Road Baltimore County

SECTION 7.8

PERIOD 3: 1944 ADDITION

This addition is also U-shaped with a playroom/gymnasium bridging wings. In the east wing are classrooms, rest rooms, and a newer boiler room. The interior of these spaces is similar to earlier sections in terms of room size and layout, but walls are cinder block instead of plaster. Ceilings are acoustical tile and floors, vinyl asbestos tile. The playroom/gymnasium is an open, two-story space with a roof system supported by wood trusses, now concealed behind acoustical tiles. At the east end of the gymnasium is a permanent raised platform that functioned as the school's original cafeteria. The Smith & May drawings indicate that this cafeteria section was separated from the gym proper by movable wood posts and a rope rail. Today, this raised section functions as a stage.

The west wing of this addition contains classrooms that mirror those of 1924 and 1930. (See Period 5 below.)

PERIOD 4: 1966 ADDITION AND RENOVATIONS

The 1966 addition included a cafeteria, two kindergarten rooms, a classroom block featuring an art room and library, and a small lobby. The interior of this addition makes use of CMU blocks walls, vinyl asbestos tile floors, and acoustical tile ceilings. Classrooms are similar to earlier ones but have one less window.

The renovation work undertaken in 1966 included the addition of walls in the 1924 auditorium space to accommodate storage and a nurses' room, the alteration of the stairs to the original boiler room and consequent reduction in size of the teachers' room, and the conversion of a 1930's classroom into the principal's office.

PERIOD 5: 1985 RENOVATION/MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM

The west wing of the 1944 addition was renovated to accommodate the Senior Center through minor changes. The former school classrooms now function as classrooms for the Edgemere Senior Center. Coat rooms and book cases still remain in this addition.

The new multi-purpose room is a large, open space with drywall walls, vinyl tile floors, and acoustical tile ceilings.

BA-2739 Edgemere Elementary School 7201 North Point Road Baltimore County

SECTION 7.9

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN STATEWIDE HISTORIC CONTEXTS

Geographic Organization:

Piedmont

Chronological/Development Periods:

Industrial/Urban Dominance (1870-1930) Modern Period (1930-present)

Historic Period Themes:

Social/Educational/Cultural

Resource Type:

Category: Building

Historic Environment: Suburban

Historic Function: School

Known Design Source: Smith & May Architects

BA-2739 Edgemere Elementary School 7201 North Point Road Baltimore County

SECTION 8.1

SIGNIFICANCE

SUMMARY

The Edgemere Elementary school is historically significant for its association with the growth of the Edgemere neighborhood in the Patapsco Neck section of Baltimore County. The growth of this neighborhood is intimately tied to the life of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation, for many years the major employer of Edgemere residents. The school also reflects the design goals of the Baltimore County Board of Education and architects Smith & May in the first and second quarters of the 20th century. The school exhibits the straightforward planning of the period, the simplicity of the design, and the incorporation of such "modern" amenities as electricity, centralized heat, daylighting, cloak rooms, book cases, and an auditorium. The Edgemere Elementary School is eligible for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places under Criteria A at the local level.

Criterion A: Properties associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history. The Edgemere Elementary School represents the growth of the Edgemere community in the Patapsco Neck section of Baltimore County. The community, built as a response to workforce needs at the neighboring Bethlehem Steel Corporation plant at Sparrows Point, is a working-class enclave along the waterways of the Patapsco Neck region. The growth of the elementary school over roughly forty years, between 1924 and 1965, portrays the evolution of this fairly isolated neck from a farming to an industrial economy.

The exterior condition of the school is good, but the loss of the original 9/9, double-hung sash windows has detracted from the building's original Colonial Revival appearance. The structural condition of the school, however, is failing, with serious deflection of floors considered dangerous by the Baltimore County Public Schools. There is also severe peeling of lead paint. The structure is scheduled to be demolished and replaced with a new structure on the same site.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The Edgemere Elementary School was originally built in 1924 as a consolidation of two existing schools for white children in the Edgemere and North Point neighborhoods. The school was thus originally known as the "North Point-Edgemere Consolidated School" until the "North Point" portion of the name was dropped between 1942 and 1965. The structure

BA-2739 Edgemere Elementary School 7201 North Point Road Baltimore County

SECTION 8.2

now standing represents the first, "modern" school in the Sparrows Point area to be built outside of Bethlehem Steel's company town.

The area that we call Edgemere today actually consists of several small communities in the lower Patapsco Neck, including Lynch Point, Waterview, Lodge Farms, Lodge Forest, Chesapeake Terrace, Jones Creek, Walnut Grove, Isle of Pines, Snyder Trailer Park, and the North Point Yacht Club. The area is defined by the Back River, the Chesapeake Bay, North Point Creek, Jones Creek, and what remains of Humphries Creek. The Edgemere landscape of today consists of scattered late 19th-century, center gable farmhouses; Foursquares; mailorder bungalows and Colonial Revival homes; and small, 20th-century waterside homes for the working class. The neighborhoods of today did not emerge until the period between the two World Wars. (The *Bromley Atlas of Baltimore County, 1915* depicts a rural area of scattered landowners devoted to farming.) These neighborhoods arose from many small subdivisions, rather than from the grand design of any single developer. It wasn't until the 1920s that the population increased enough to warrant the construction of a modern schoolhouse. Those increases were attributable to employment opportunities at Bethlehem Steel's Sparrows Point plant, and, to a lesser degree, at nearby Fort Howard.

Edgemere in the 17th and 18th Centuries

At the time of English settlement, the lower section of the Patapsco Neck was rich farmland prized for its versatility. It supported the growing of grains, truck farming of vegetables and fruits, harvesting of timber, and pasturage of land. Fish and other marine animals added to the area's economic desirability, offering a rich food resource for consumption and sale. A quiet farming community, the area became famous in 1814, when the Battle of North Point was fought along its main road. In that battle, the residents of the community overpowered 5,000 British forces and killed their leader, General Ross, thus preventing the troops from reaching their intended destination, Baltimore City.

Edgemere in the 19th Century

Farming continued throughout the 19th century by residents such as the Todds (the area's first settlers), Lynches, Rodgers, Orems, Rusks, Joneses, Kaufmans and Shaws. By 1850, the entire southern tip of Sparrows Point was owned by Charles Stewart. The population of the area, although slim, supported what was almost certainly a one-room school house by 1850. This first known school in the lower Neck area stood on the same site as the Edgemere Elementary School today. (Figure 4) The intersection of the area's two oldest

BA-2739 Edgemere Elementary School 7201 North Point Road Baltimore County

SECTION 8.3

roads - the North Point and Sparrows Point Roads - was an obvious site for a community structure.

By 1877, this original school house was supplanted by a new one constructed nearby to the south on North Point Road, which appears on the 1877 *Hopkins Atlas* (Figure 5). That structure, known as the North Point School, still stands at 7423 North Point Road, at the intersection of North Point and Lodge Farm Roads (Figure 6A). Originally a one-story, end-gable, two-room schoolhouse, it is now a private home, with several additions and newer siding concealing its true character. A "colored school" also existed in North Point, although its exact location and date of construction are unknown. Historic photographs indicate that it was an end-gable, wood frame, one-room school house.

Residents of the area during the late 1870s included the Rogers, Watkins, Joneses, and several female landowners: the Mrs. Lynch, Snyder, and Clarey. William J. Albert, a Congressman from Baltimore, purchased Charles Stewart's Sparrows Point land and that of his neighbor, H. Kaufman, in 1860. Albert too established a summer home there and added a shooting lodge. By 1877, the whole southern section of Sparrows Point was recognized as a recreational haven. The Maryland Steamboat Company operated a summer resort known as Holly Grove there. Steamboats from downtown Baltimore made the trip to Sparrows Point five times a day during the height of the season. The resort featured a restaurant and picnic grounds.

The Fitzell Family and the Founding of the Maryland Steel Company

Upon William Albert's death, his Sparrows Point land was bequeathed to his son, Lowery, who, in turn, sold it to Mr. and Mrs. William Fitzell in 1884. Fitzell was one of four brothers who had emigrated from Ireland, eventually making their way to Sparrows Point to engage in farming. The most prosperous of the four, William successfully farmed his land for three years, when he was persuaded to sell it to the Pennsylvania Steel Company of Steelton, Pennsylvania in 1887. He became one of five landholders to turn over his land to the iron manufacturing concern.

¹ Annual Report, Public Schools, Baltimore County, Maryland, 1924. (Located at Greenwood, Offices of the Baltimore County Board of Education.)

BA-2739 Edgemere Elementary School 7201 North Point Road Baltimore County

SECTION 8.4

The steel company purchased the Sparrows Point property because it needed a tidewater location for construction of blast furnaces to convert Cuban ore to pig iron. Frederick Wood, the company's chief engineer and discoverer of the Cuban ore deposits, selected the Sparrows Point site from several Chesapeake and Delaware Bay locations. The site was ideal for its deep water port, relative proximity to coke supplies in western Pennsylvania, and opportunity for rail connection to the company's Steelton, Pennsylvania plant. Within just a year of its purchase of the land, the Company erected a huge mill and the beginnings of a planned company town to serve its 1,000 workers. The company's workforce was diverse; comprised of black and white Americans, as well as Germans, Irish, Russians, and Hungarians.

At the direction of Frederick Wood, the mill complex and model town were laid out on the former Fitzell peach orchard in a grid system with two sections: one for white and one for black workers (Figure 7). Meanwhile, William Fitzell rebuilt his Queen Anne mansion, destroyed for the company mill, on Sparrows Point Road to exactly the same specifications as his former home.² Fitzell also began erecting rental properties along the road, recognizing that there was income to be had from newcomers to the area.

Each of the steel company's segregated communities featured orderly rows of housing - some brick and some frame. The frame dwellings in the white community were executed in the Shingle and Stick Styles. The company also provided its town with a company store and post office and schools. Lots were made available to various denominations for the construction of churches. Cordoned off and set apart from the orderly towns, grim barracks provided shelter for unskilled, unmarried, immigrant and black laborers. Everything within the towns was run by the company, including the hiring of teachers, the enforcement of law, and the collection of garbage.

Children of company employees did not attend the local North Point School but were provided with their own facilities instead. The white part of town featured two schools built in the late 1880s: a kindergarten near 5th and E Streets³ and a wood-frame primary school at 4th and D. The black part of town featured one school for grades 1-8 in a two-room frame structure at 6th and J.

² The William Fitzell House on Sparrows Point Road no longer stands.

³ According to local histories, the Sparrows Point kindergarten was reportedly the first kindergarten south of the Mason & Dixon line.

BA-2739 Edgemere Elementary School 7201 North Point Road Baltimore County

SECTION 8.5

The population of the company town increased as the steel company's fortunes grew. By 1891, the Sparrows Point concern incorporated as the Maryland Steel Company, and installed Bessemer converters and rolling machines to make steel products and rails for transportation. A second development of the time, the formation of Army fortifications to the east (Fort Howard), also resulted in an increase in the area's population.

Sparrows Point and Edgemere in the Early 20th Century

Accommodating ever-larger populations, the school structures within the company town were modified and expanded. The black school received an addition and the use of a portable structure around the turn-of-the-century. A new brick elementary school was built for the white students near the former school in 1903. Finally, a brick high school was constructed at 7th and D Streets circa 1910.

There were enough people living in the area outside company bounds by 1915 that residents felt compelled to give the area a name. According to local legend, the term "Edgemere" was conjured up by the local populace in the early 1900s.⁴ The term has Anglo Saxon roots and means the edge of a body of water. The name "Edgemere" appears for the first time on the 1915 Bromley Atlas of Baltimore County identifying the area alongside Humphreys Creek, populated primarily by the Fitzells (Figure 8).

Construction of the Edgemere School

Some time after 1915, the North Point Methodist Episcopal Church built a social hall south of Sparrows Point Road and north of Jones Creek.⁵ According to local sources, it was converted almost immediately thereafter into a two-room school house, which came to be called the Edgemere School. This building, which still stands at 2533 School House Lane, is a Shingle Style, end-gabled structure with windows running the length of its side walls (Figure 6B). While children in the North Point Road area still went to the North Point School, and company children still attended school within Maryland Steel Company bounds,

⁴ Hulett C. Baird, Edgemere, Dundalk-Patapsco Neck Historical Society, 1988.

⁵ While local lore places the beginnings of the school house in the church social hall at 1915, the building must postdate that year, since nothing appears on its site on the 1915 *Bromley Atlas*.

BA-2739 Edgemere Elementary School 7201 North Point Road Baltimore County

SECTION 8.6

children in the western section of what is now known as Edgemere attended this Edgemere school. The principal of the Edgemere School was Mary E. Simmons, who lived on E Street in Sparrows Point. After the consolidation of the area's schools in 1924, Ms. Simmons would become principal of the North Point-Edgemere Consolidated School.

In 1916, Bethlehem Steel Company purchased the Maryland Steel Company complex at Sparrows Point, along with adjacent land for expansion. The company increased the plant's operations substantially, constructing a second shipyard to accommodate orders resulting from World War I. Despite the build up of such heavy industry at the Point, nearby Edgemere became popular in the 1920s with working-class Baltimoreans who wanted inexpensive summer homes on small waterfront lots. At the same time, an increasing number of shipyard and steel mill workers decided year-round housing in Edgemere was more desirable than life within the company town.

The Construction of the North Point-Edgemere Consolidated School

With year-round residences increasing, the two small primary schools outside the company town became overburdened. By 1922, the enrollment of the North Point School had grown to 116, and a portable school was in operation on the site to accommodate the overflow. The Edgemere School, still being rented from the Methodist church, had a population of 70 but was expected to jump to 113 by January, 1924.⁷ The Baltimore County Board of Education had embarked on a program of "consolidation" a few years earlier in instances where small, one-to-three teacher rural schoolhouses were insufficient. In 1924, the County authorized the consolidation of four schools, including the North Point and Edgemere Schools, both three-teacher schools. The amount of \$86.792/95 was allocated for the cost of the land and the construction of the building.⁸ A structure with eight classrooms and an auditorium was designed by Smith & May, Baltimore architects.

Meanwhile, the Sparrows Point schools were also being modernized. The high school at 7th and D was replaced with a larger building in the Collegiate Gothic style in 1923. (Until the Sparrows Point Middle/High School was erected in 1957, white children in the Edgemere

⁶ "Waterfront Region Proud of its Place in History," Baltimore Sun, May 5, 1995.

⁷ Annual Report, Public Schools, Baltimore County, Maryland, 1924.

⁸ Ibid.

BA-2739 Edgemere Elementary School 7201 North Point Road Baltimore County

SECTION 8.7

neighborhood attended high school at Sparrows Point.) The black elementary school was replaced by the George Bragg School at 10th and J Streets in 1927, due to severe flood damage of the original structure. A black high school would not open in the area until 1939.

Edgemere in the Depression Years

Almost immediately after the construction of the North Point-Edgemere Consolidated School, it was too small for its population. Unlike some schools of the County planned originally to feature later additions as money permitted, there is no evidence in the original Smith & May drawings that the footprint for an addition was part of the original plans. Six years after its construction, a new wing was designed to hold eight more classrooms at a cost of \$50,807.06. This addition would sustain the population during the Depression years, when government subsidies to railroads translated into direct profits for Bethlehem Steel, charged with supplying rails for the nation's railroads. As a result of the subsidies, the company's capacity rose from 35 to 55 percent and it employed 12,000 people in 1934. More and more of these employees were venturing outside company bounds for housing. The surrounding farming community of Edgemere was being transformed into a working-class community for Bethlehem Steel workers. By January 1938, the Company's payroll had jumped to 20,000 employees and the Edgemere School was nearly ready for its second addition.

Production at the steel plant during World War II demanded a workforce 25,000 strong. The Edgemere neighborhood, along with other Patapsco Neck communities, exploded in growth during the war years. A large new wing of the school designed in 1942 by Smith & May and built in 1944 was financed by grants from the Federal Works Agency, the government's wartime builder. The new wing, added to the southwest of the facility, incorporated more classrooms, a new boiler room, and a playroom/gymnasium/cafeteria.

⁹ The original, 1924 drawings show the 1930 addition's outline, but this appears to have been drawn in by a second hand at a later date.

¹⁰ Annual Report, Public Schools, Baltimore County, Maryland, 1930.

¹¹ Neal A. Brooks and Eric G. Rockel, A History of Baltimore County, Friends of the Towson Library, Inc., 1979 (p. 360).

BA-2739 Edgemere Elementary School 7201 North Point Road Baltimore County

SECTION 8.8

Edgemere continued to grow, still a product primarily, but no longer solely of Bethlehem Steel. In the early 1960s, the Company employed over 30,000 people, but other industries also contributed to jobs for area residents. Edgemere was home increasingly not just to Bethlehem Steel workers, but to others who worked in the City or County. The school's population peaked in the mid-1960s, as Bethlehem Steel began to physically dismantle its company town. It became essential to add yet another addition to the Edgemere Elementary School. This addition, designed by Hall, Ritter and Sprinkle and built in 1966, added more classrooms and a cafeteria, and reconfigured the building's administrative offices.

Finally, in 1985, the classrooms of Smith & May's second addition (1944) were converted into the Edgemere Senior Center and a large, multi-purpose room added to the rear of the building. The project was undertaken by the joint venture of Gregory Mitchell - Architecture and Kelly Clayton & Mojzisek.

In 1995, Baltimore County Public Schools conducted a feasibility study on the rehabilitation of the Edgemere Elementary School. The study's authors concluded that it would be too costly to rehabilitate the structure. The County then contracted Grimm and Parker Architects to design a new school, which will ultimately replace the current complex.

ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING

The original school was designed by the well-known Baltimore firm of Smith & May. It was a one-story, T-shaped structure, the plan of which featured a central block of four classrooms around an open auditorium with a double-loaded corridor of classrooms behind it. The building, described as "commodious and modern throughout" was noted for meeting "reasonable modern demands" and for its inclusion of an auditorium. A second new school, named the Westchester-Consolidated School, was built the same year in the County, executed in the same plan as that for North Point-Edgemere, but in rough-faced stone instead of brick. Its similarity to North Point-Edgemere virtually guarantees that it was the work of Smith & May as well, and that the plan was a standard solution to the requirements for a primary school in a small community.

The original structure featured plenty of room for outdoor activity and expansion to the rear, if necessary. Built in the Colonial Revival style, the new school was modern in its

¹² Annual Report, 1924.

BA-2739 Edgemere Elementary School 7201 North Point Road Baltimore County

SECTION 8.9

principles. Its architects were constructing schools in Baltimore City at the time, and therefore would have been familiar with the Strayer School Survey of 1921, a study by educational consultant George Drayton Strayer, on the condition of Baltimore's schools. Strayer's Baltimore study was replete with photographs of schools with outdoor privies, smoke-filled classrooms, poor illumination, and overcrowded conditions. The study had a forceful impact on City and County administrators alike. A largescale modernization program commenced to correct the situation. In the 1920s, modernization meant a decent school setting with play area and flag pole; steam heat instead of coal stoves; well-placed, operational windows; good ventilation; electricity; spaciousness; and indoor plumbing. It also meant standardized classroom sizes and layouts, with cloak rooms and book shelves for each classroom, and "specialized interior spaces," such as an auditorium and, in larger schools, a gymnasium.

The two additions by Smith & May within the building's period of significance continued the straightforward approach to construction begun in 1924. Modest design motifs are repeated on the exterior and interior, such as the bonding of the brick, framing of the window banks and/or soldier course cornice work, interior classroom layout, etc. By 1944, the requirement for a broader array of "specialized interior spaces" had become the rule, and the introduction of the playroom/gymnasium/cafeteria reflects this trend.

Smith & May

Smith & May were well-known Baltimore architects at the time they received the Edgemere Elementary School commission. Wilson Levering Smith (1873-1931) and Howard May (1879-1941) began working together in 1907 in the City. Smith received his education at Johns Hopkins and Columbia universities. May apprenticed with the highly respected late 19th-century Baltimore architect, T. Buckler Ghequier. Their early work together was commissioned by motor companies, and the firm completed several noteworthy showrooms and sales offices for that type of establishment. They also were responsible for a number of distinguished suburban houses. One notable example is Balmuckety, a 1914 Georgian Revival residence completed for Aubrey Pearre in Owings Mills. A second example is the residence of Dr. and Mrs. Walter Wicks, for whom the firm designed "Wickliffe," a Late Gothic Revival/Tudor home that is now the Maryvale Preparatory School. Other institutional

¹³ Peter E. Kurtze and Marcia M. Miller, *Baltimore City School Architecture*, 1829-1941, Office of Research, Survey and Registration, Maryland Historical Trust, September 1990.

BA-2739 Edgemere Elementary School 7201 North Point Road Baltimore County

SECTION 8.10

work included the Baltimore Trust Building, which Smith & May designed jointly with the firm Taylor & Fisher, a 1919 branch library of the Baltimore County library system, and a synagogue on Park Heights Avenue.

In the 1920s, they firm became very active in commissions for the Baltimore County Board of Education, completing designs by 1930 for 45 school buildings in the County. Other work by the firm for the County includes the Westchester Consolidated School of 1924, the Essex Elementary School of 1925 (BA-2630), the Towson High School of 1925 (BA-1105), the Catonsville High School of 1925, the Relay Elementary School (BA-2387), Arbutus Elementary School (BA-2511), and Franklin Middle School of 1930 (BA-1384). Is

In addition to County commissions, the firm was employed for several years as the principal consulting firm for the Maryland State Department of Education, with design responsibilities for all public schools in the state. They designed Gwynn's Fall-Junior High School, Forest Park Junior High School, McDonogh School, the State Normal School at Salisbury, and additions to the State Normal School at Towson.¹⁶

¹⁴ American School and University, New York: American School Publications Company, 1930 (pp. 515-516).

¹⁵ The designs of the Towson High School and Catonsville High School are virtually identical, except that Catonsville sits on a fully raised basement and is effectively three stories instead of two.

¹⁶ Obituary of Wilson Levering Smith, 1931, obtained from the files of James Wollon, Jr., A.I.A. Source of obituary not identified.

BA-2739 Edgemere Elementary School 7201 North Point Road Baltimore County

SECTION 9.1

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SECTION 9.2

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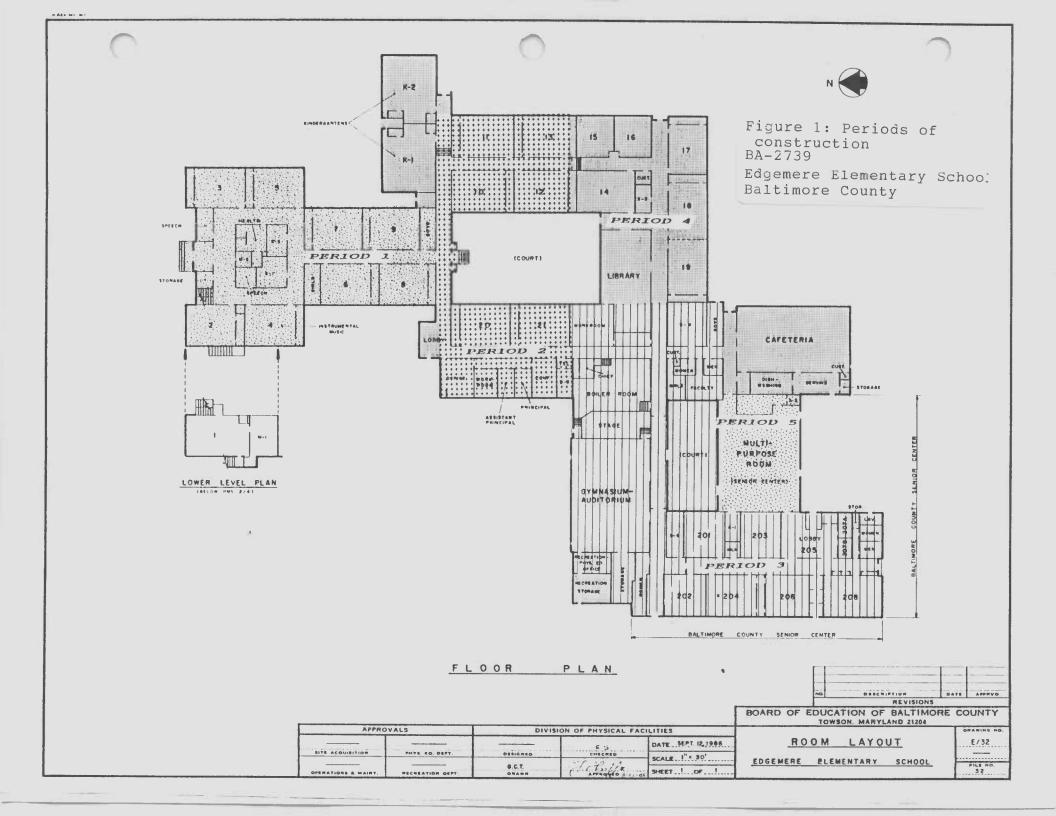
North Point-Edgemere Consolidated School. Smith & May. February 25, 1924

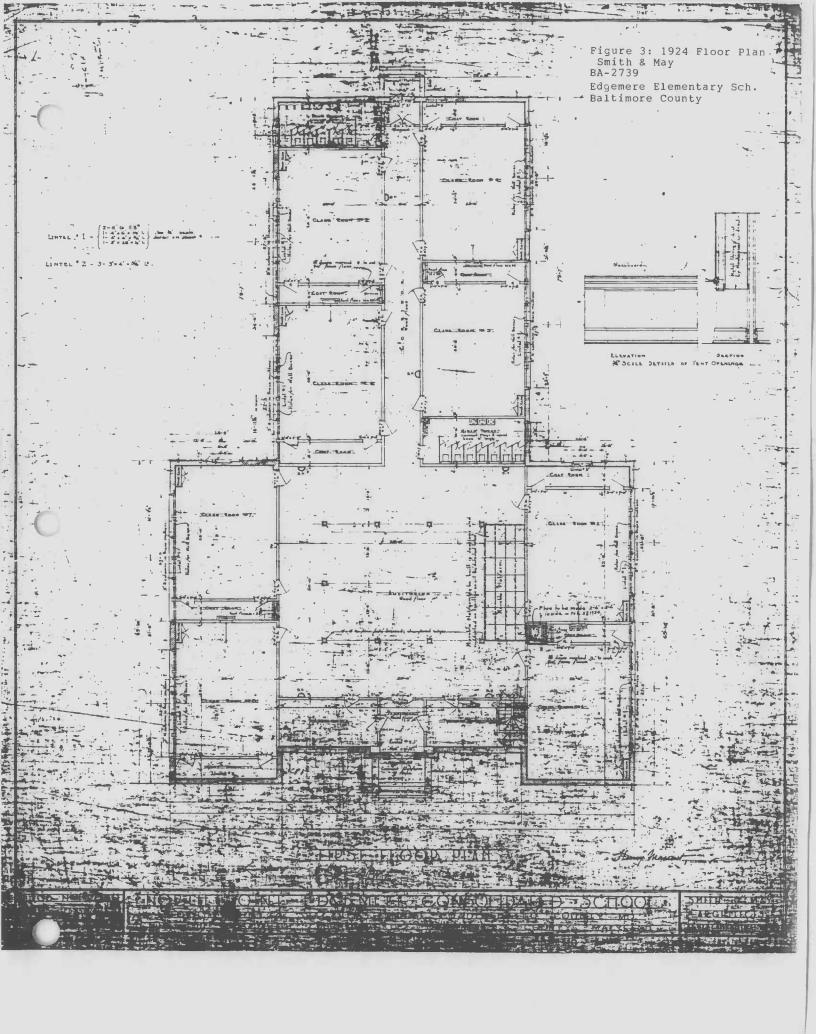
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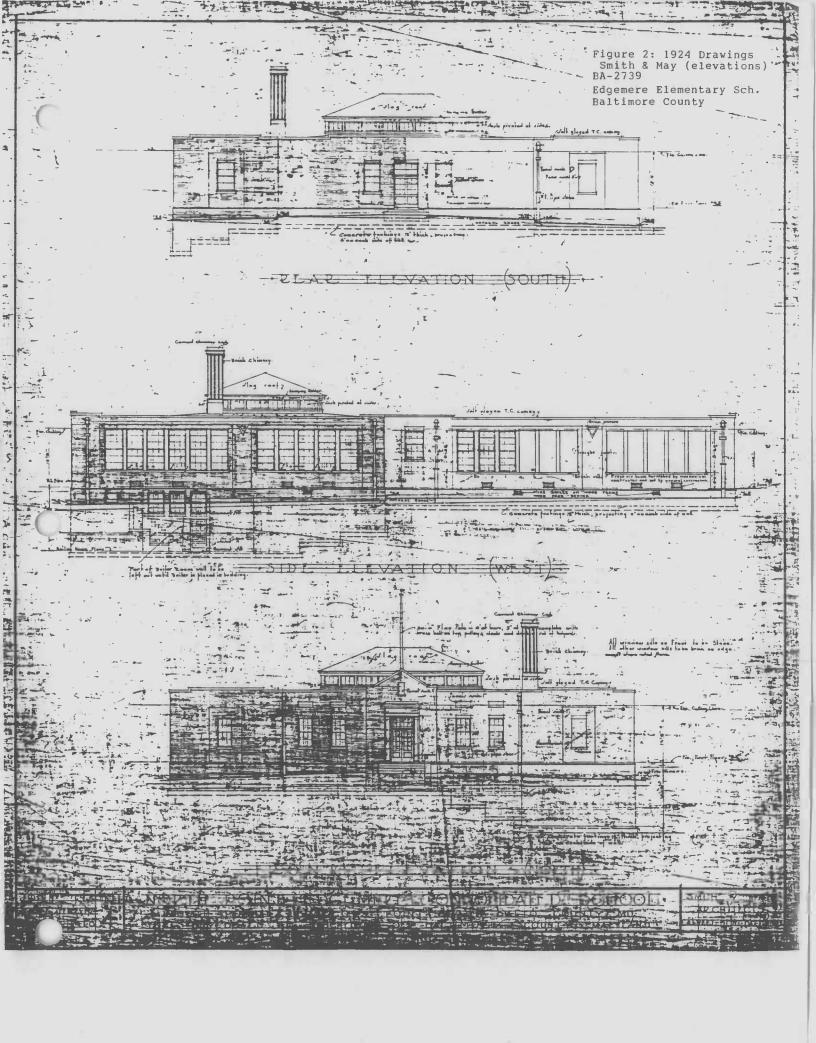
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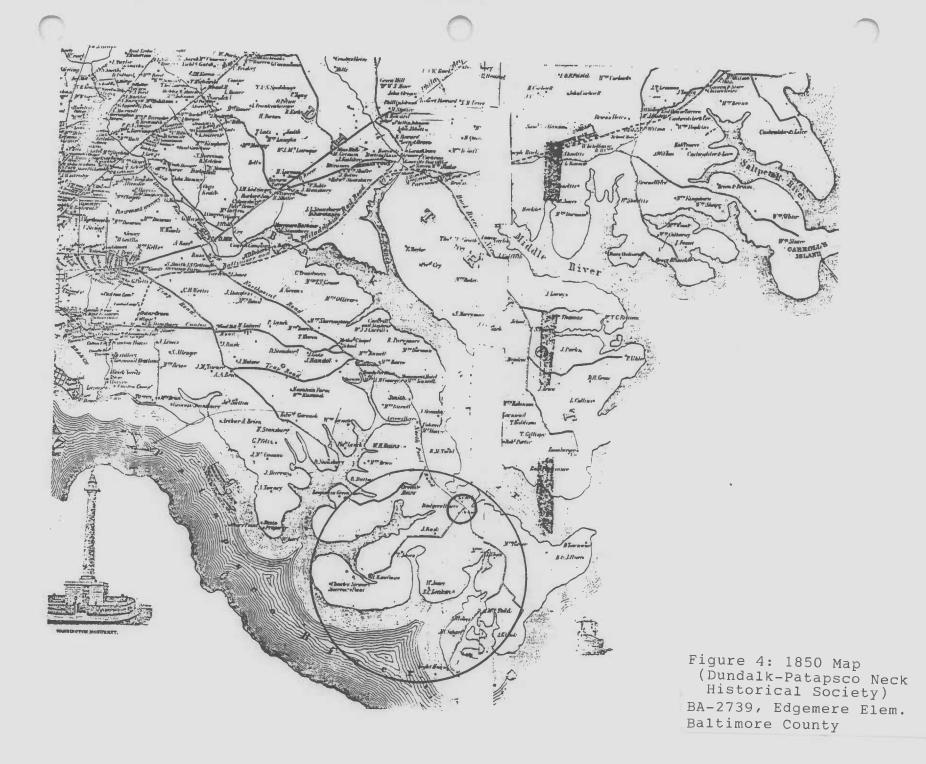
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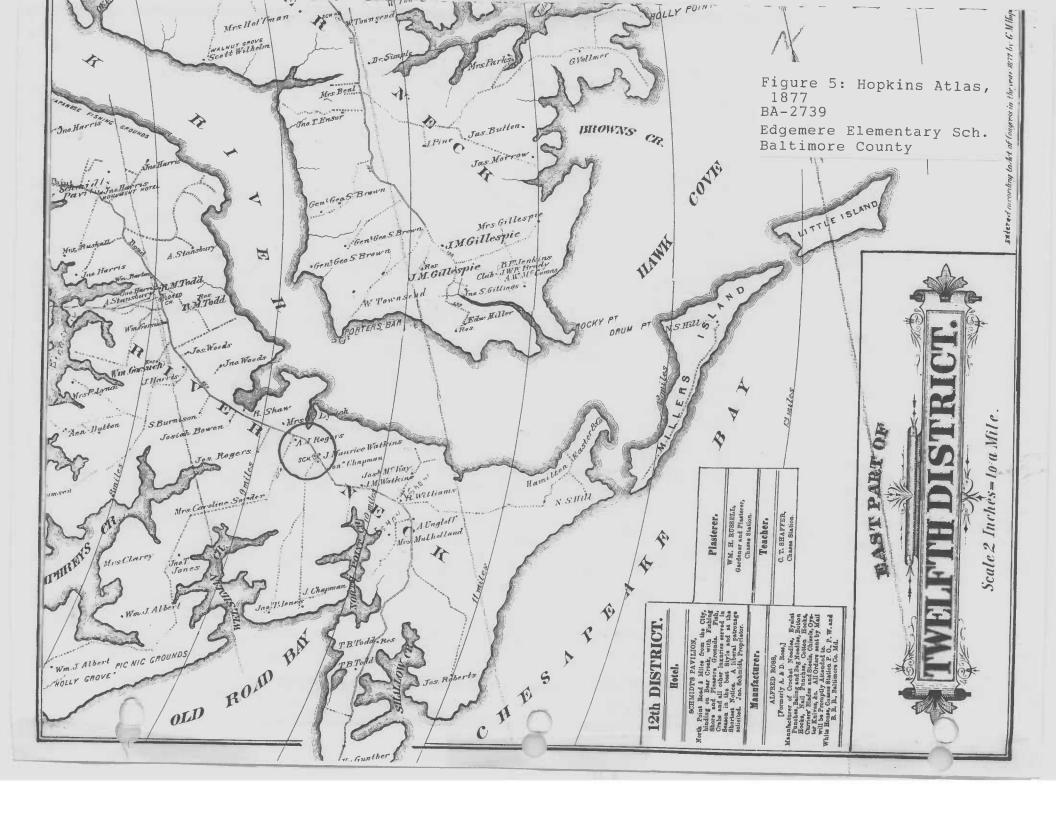
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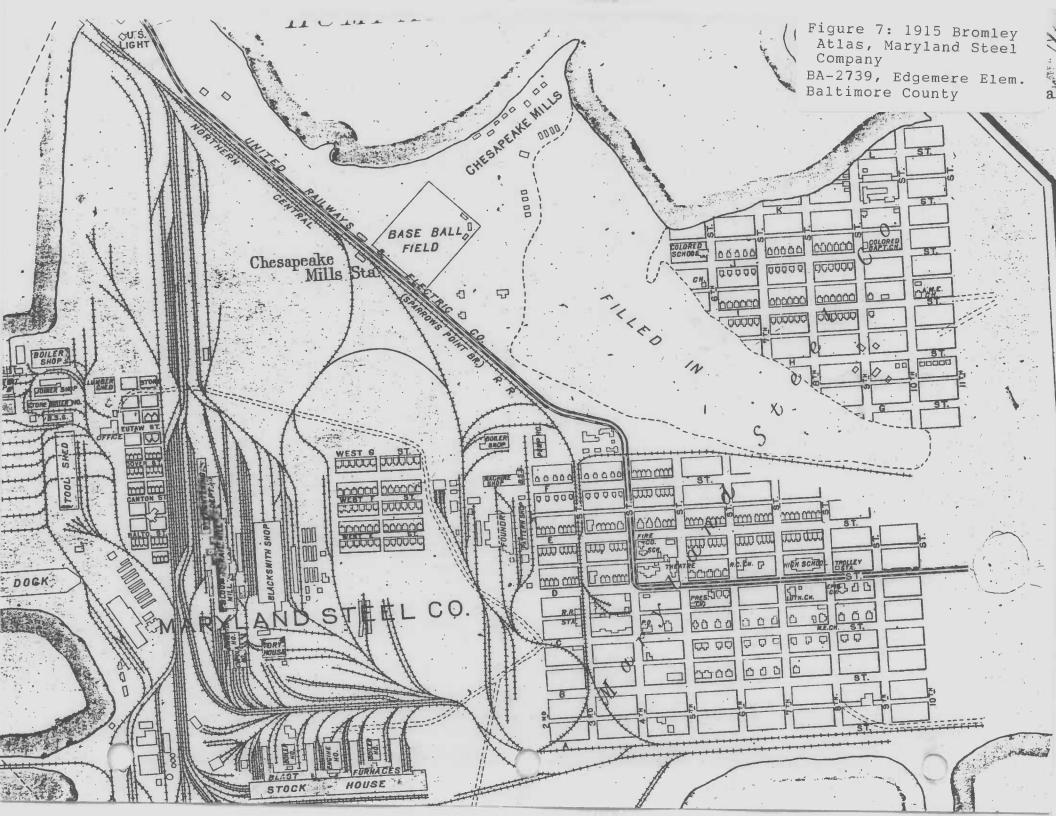


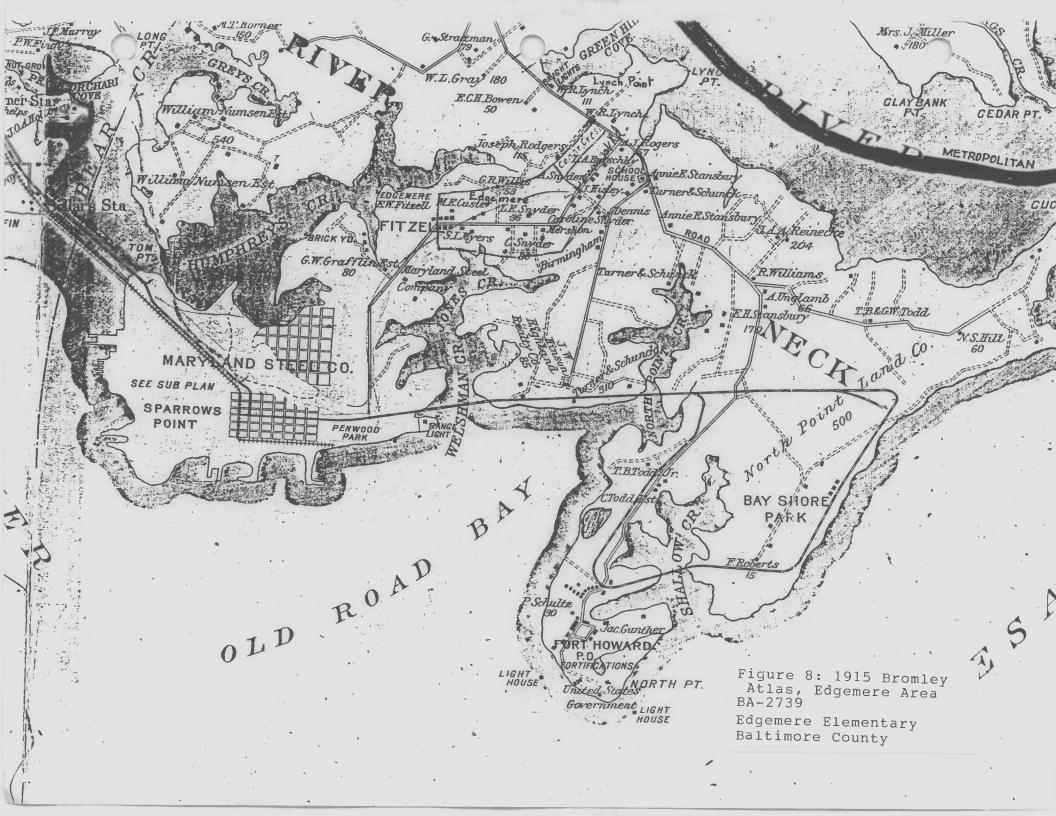












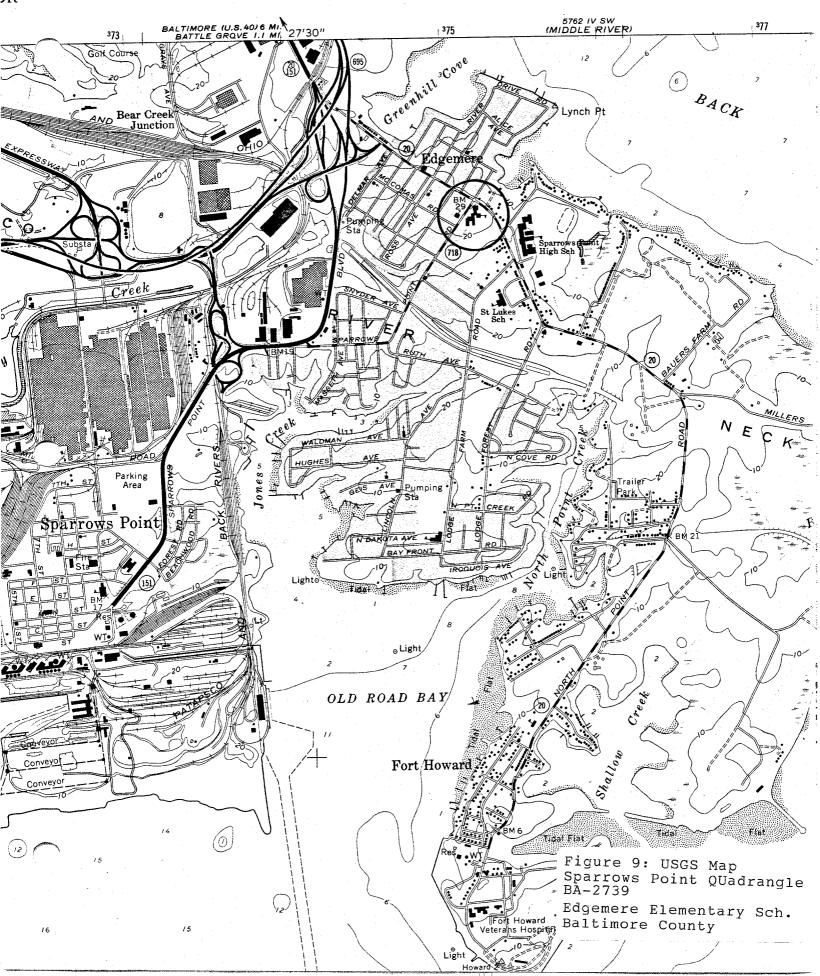




Figure 6 A: North Point School BA-2739 Edgemere Elementary School Baltimore County



figure 6B: Original "Edgemere School" BA-2739 Edgemere Elementary Baltimore County



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ORIGINAL LIBRARY, 1924 SECTION
11 OF 13



BA - 2739 EDGEMERE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BALTIMORE GUNTY, MD ELIZABETH JO LAMPL MD SHPO GIRLS' RESTROOM, 1924 SECTION 12 OF 13



BA-2739 EDGEMELE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BALTIMORE GUNTY, MD EUZABETH JO LAMPL 4/96 MD SHPO 1944 GYMNASIUM /PLAYROOM 18 OF 13